

For Official Release
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Office of the Governor
Utulei, American Samoa
March 17, 2022



“The Office of the Governor holds the first of many Ethics Training.”

“I have high expectations for the current administration to restore the public’s faith and trust in government, and uphold high standards for public service. Paramount in that trust is the principle that public office, whether elected or appointed, may not be used for personal gain or private advantage.”

As part of the Lemanu-Talauega Administration’s implementation of Executive Order 008-2021: An Order Establishing a Code of Ethics, the Governor’s Office held its first class on March 8th, 2022, on Ethics and the expectations that employees commit to exhibiting leadership and integrity. Due to the Code Red restrictions that were in effect for American Samoa, the class was conducted online.

The Governor’s Office Ethics Officer and lead instructor, Chief Legal Counsel Jason Mitchell, introduced the three pillars of the Code: Leadership, Integrity, and Commitment. The Administration’s goal is for the American Samoa Government to provide the highest quality of public service to its citizens. GO Ethics Officer Mitchell highlights the relationship of responsibilities of ASG employees with those in leadership positions in order to create a strong workforce.

Governor Lemanu mentioned previously that he has placed high expectations for his administration to “restore the public’s faith and trust in government and uphold high standards for public service.” Paramount in that trust is the principle that public office, whether elected or appointed, may not be used for personal gain or private advantage.

GO Ethics Officer Mitchell outlined the Integrity and Commitment sections of the Code. One of the discussions the class engaged in was on a specific clause under the title of Integrity that states: “Employees shall not solicit or accept tips, gifts, or any other payment to allow any person to bypass normal procedures, or to perform a service that is normally done without charge.” A factor to consider is that tipping and gifting is a normal practice of the Samoan culture, however it is not encouraged under any circumstances for any public employee.

Prior to this, Ethics Officers from across the government have completed their initial class on the requirements of Executive Order 008-2021. Their training will continue. Ethics Officers will be taking Ethical Decision Making for Governmental Employees, an 8-hour course that is presented by the Graduate School USA later this month.

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